

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, March 18, 2007

Passage: Acts 6:1-7

Memory Passage: Matthew 20:26

TODAY: From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 6:1.** What was continuing to happen to the church in Jerusalem?
- (b) What problem did this cause? How did this threaten the unity of the church?
- (c) What did the church see as its responsibility in addition to teaching and evangelism (James 1:27; Galatians 2:10; Galatians 6:10)? How did this become a burden to the apostles?
- (d) In 1 Timothy 5:3-16, what were to be the priorities of the widows that the church helped?
- (e) Why was this ministry so important in the days of the early church? How is it different today? Do we still have such responsibilities to those in our church with needs (Acts 2:45; Acts 4:35)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 6:1 and James 1:27. Talk together about how the church should respond to the needs of others. Give some examples of how the church has ministered to people in need in the church. Are there ever times when we should not help others financially (2 Thessalonians 3:10; 1 Timothy 5:8). Pray that our church will be attentive to the needs of people.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 6:2-4.** What was the reason that the apostles could not take time to be involved in serving the widows?
- (b) What problem was Israel facing in Exodus 18:13-18? What priority did Jethro tell Moses to focus on (Exodus 18:19-20)? How is this similar to the situation in Acts 6?
- (c) What pattern did Jethro suggest so that no one's spiritual or practical needs were neglected in the nation of Israel? How does this compare to the apostles solution in Acts 6?
- (d) What do these passages tell us about the ministry of the elder (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:9)? Make a list of the things they do? How would you summarize the nature of their ministry?
- (e) How important is prayer as a ministry for the elders (James 5:14-16; 1 Samuel 12:23)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 6:2-4 and Hebrews 13:17. Discuss the role of an elder. Why do we have elders? What is their primary responsibility? What would happen if the elders spent all their time meeting needs in the church? Pray for your elders, that they would be men of prayer and the Word and that they would faithfully shepherd the church.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 6:3 and Acts 6:5-6.** What were the *qualifications* that the apostles set forth for the congregation?
- (b) What were the apostles "setting them apart to do?" How does the ministry of the deacon complement the ministry of the elder?
- (c) Make a list of the qualifications of a deacon from 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Why are spiritual qualifications required for such work?
- (d) What specific responsibility did these men have in Acts 6? What did the apostles see as their relationship to these men (Acts 6:4)? Some have said that deacons are servants to free the elders to focus on shepherding the church. Is this true in Acts 6?
- (e) Who did the congregation chose? What do we learn about Stephen and Phillip in Acts 6:8-10 and Acts 8:5-6?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 6:3-6. What are deacons? How are they different from elders? What is their main responsibility? What are their main qualifications? Why do you think it required a spiritual person to do this "work" of serving tables? Spend some time thanking God for all the servants He has given to your church.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 6:6-7.** What was the result of this action? What is the significance of the "great many of the *priests*" becoming obedient to the faith? Why do you think this occurred?
- (b) *What* does Luke say "increased/multiplied" (Acts 6:6; Acts 12:24; Acts 19:20)? How is this growth related to the deacons (Acts 6:2, 4)?
- (c) What does Luke mean when he speaks of "many becoming *obedient to the faith*?" How do faith and obedience go together (Romans 1:5; Romans 16:26; Hebrews 5:9; Hebrews 11:8; 1 Peter 4:17)?
- (d) How are good deeds connected to the spread of the gospel (Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Peter 2:11-12; James 2:14-17; Galatians 2:10)?
- (e) Read Titus 3:8, Titus 3:16, and Titus 2:14. What do these passages tell us about the importance of doing good deeds as believers? How are these deeds an evidence of our salvation?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 6:6-7 and 1 Peter 2:11-12. Talk about doing good deeds. Do they save us (Ephesians 2:8-9)? Should we do them? What is the connection between faith and works? What is the connection between faith and obedience? How are our works/deeds an evidence of the work of God in us? Ask God to show you how you can reach out to someone this week and show them the love of the Lord through your good deeds.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

- (a) **Read John 13:1-17.** What did Jesus do for his disciples? What lesson was he trying to teach them?
- (b) What does the term *deacon* mean? In what sense are all called to this ministry?
- (c) What does Matthew 20:26-28 tell us about being great in the kingdom? Who is our example in this? How is this the opposite of the way we normally see greatness?
- (d) What does Peter tell us about service in 1 Peter 4:10-11? Are *service* ministries less important than *speaking* ministries? Explain.
- (e) *Family:* Read John 13:1-7 and Matthew 20:26-28. Talk about serving others. Why should we serve others? How do you think God has gifted you to serve Him? Talk about this together and pray that God will allow you to use your gifts to give Him glory in whatever you do.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Acts 6:1-7. Are these deacons in Acts 6? What characteristics of deacon ministries do we see in them? What are their qualifications? Why are they so important to the church? Why are they so important to the elders? What happens to the whole church whenever people serve as God desires? Pray for worship services and for those who serve the Lord even behind the scenes.

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The Ministry of the Church

“...whoever desires to be great among you, let him be your servant.”